

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims below replaces all prior versions of claims in the application.

1. (Currently amended): An expansion valve including a power element that senses pressure and temperature of refrigerant at an outlet of an evaporator and controls a valve lift of a valve portion, to thereby control a flow rate of refrigerant supplied to the evaporator, characterized in that a maximum value of the valve lift is set such that the flow rate is ~~equal to 1.0 to~~ does not exceed 1.4 times a flow rate corresponding to a tonnage set as a capacity which can pass a maximum flow rate;

wherein, the power element causes a center disk for transmitting displacement of a diaphragm sensing the pressure and temperature of the refrigerant to a valve element of the valve portion via a shaft to be brought into abutment with an inner wall of a housing toward the valve portion, thereby defining the maximum valve lift of the valve portion;
wherein an end of the shaft on a side opposite to the valve portion is held by a holder;
wherein said holder is fixed in position so as not to affect the maximum valve lift.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently amended): The expansion valve as claimed in claim [[2]] 1, wherein the center disk is guided in a direction of displacement of the diaphragm, by a holder holding an end of the shaft on a side opposite to the valve portion.

4. (Original): The expansion valve as claimed in claim 1, wherein the valve portion comprises a valve seat, a valve element having a shape of a ball and disposed in a manner opposed to the valve seat from an upstream side, and a spring for urging the valve element in a valve-closing direction, and wherein the valve seat is tapered such that an amount of tapering is equal to or larger than an amount of axial motion of the valve element.

5. (Currently amended): The expansion valve of claim 1, ~~further comprising a holder~~, wherein said holder is free of direct contact with said center disk and wherein the lower surface of said center disk is only brought into abutment with said inner wall of the housing.